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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The English Anarchists, plumb-line or otherwise, who compose the Legitimation League, must have been a little chagrined at receiving from the State Socialist, G. Bernard Shaw, the following accurately-delivered Anarchistic blow, quoted in the second number of their interesting magazine, "The Adult": "You are extremely conventional, working for legitimation of the illegitimate, instead of illegitimation of the legitimate, which is the true line of progress."

Every day has its deal this fall, and the George men are doing the dealing, dickering with plutocratic "Cits" one day and with disgruntled "Dems" the next, thus dishing up a conglomerate of boodle and bile to tempt the hungry to vote for their idol. Talk about machine politics! Why, Platt and Croker are not "in it" with Boss Abbott and Boss Johnson. And George, the innocent, doesn't know a thing about it, bless you! As he hid behind Judge Maguire in 1887, so in 1897 he hides behind Tom Johnson. The cowardly traitor always has a wicked partner.

A Single-Taxer's Fear of the Truth.

The following correspondence between the editor of Liberty and a prominent Single Taxer of this city, whose name is well known to readers of this paper, is self-explanatory:

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21, 1897.

BENJ. R. TUCKER, ESQ.,

My dear sir:

I remember you told me once, and I think published the statement, that, if George ever ran for office, you would publish your paper on "Henry George, Traitor," in regard to the Anarchists, and distribute it widely among workingmen. Would not the effect of this be to help Tammany Hall? I am, of course, as you know, in favor of the election of George, but, if we cannot have George, I want Low. Do you think that under the circumstances it would be judicious to do so?

I am yours faithfully,

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 22, 1897.

My dear sir:

Your memory is accurate in regard to the statement which you attribute to me; and the intention which I announced to you I shall carry out to the letter. In fact, when your note of yesterday reached me, a very large edition of my pamphlet, "Henry George, Traitor," was coming from the press, and many thousands of copies will be scattered broadcast through the city during the coming week.

I quite agree with you that one effect of the distribution of this pamphlet will be to swell the vote for the Tammany ticket. But this prospect does not act on me as a deterrent, and for two reasons.

In the first place, the pamphlet, though swelling the vote for Van Wyck, will not have a controlling effect upon the result, for the election of Van Wyck is, in my judgment, amply assured, without the aid of the pamphlet.

In the second place, it is a matter of entire indifference to me whether the pamphlet will help Tammany or not. As a reader of my publications, you should be aware that I look for no lasting or important improvement in human welfare from the action of so-called "good" governments, and that I look with no *especial* dread upon the governments which you, I presume, consider bad. To me all governments are bad, and from my point of view, if you will permit the paradox, the worse may prove the better for being worse. Whether, then, my attack upon Henry George helps Van Wyck, Low, Tracy, or Cruikshank is of no consequence to me. If it shall reduce the vote for Henry George, my object will have been attained, in a degree relative to the importance of the reduction. In 1886, out of a total vote of about 218,000 cast for the leading candidates for the New York mayoralty, Henry George received 68,000. Assuming that the total vote in 1897 will be 525,000, Mr. George, to do as well relatively as he did in 1886, must receive 163,000. The number of votes by which he falls short of that figure will measure the extent to which the people have found him out during the last ten years. My effort is to make that shortage as marked as possible; for I conceive that the question whether the people shall be robbed and ruled a trifle more or less next year than this, or by one method rather than another, or by a new set of thieves instead of the old set, is a matter of little or no moment in comparison with that of securing the great movement for the emancipation of labor against betrayal in the future, by punishing the traitor who, in a critical hour, gave his sanction to the putting to death upon the gallows of four of that movement's valiant and innocent champions rather than damage his political prospects by lifting his voice in their behalf against the torrent of insane passion that was then raging.

Your note gives me both pleasure and sorrow: pleasure at finding in it a virtual confession that a knowledge of the facts concerning Henry George's conduct in 1887 will deter workingmen from voting for him in 1897; sorrow to see that a man of your lofty character will stoop to support a candidate the facts about whose public career you are afraid and ashamed to have known, and seek stoutly to suppress. My pamphlet is irrefutable. That you very well know. Indeed, no admirer of Henry George, so far as I am aware, has made any attempt to publicly answer it. On the contrary, two of the most active and influential Single Taxers in the United States—both of them your personal friends, both my personal friends, one a prominent western lawyer, the other a wealthy eastern manufacturer—have said of this pamphlet, one that it is "perfectly just," the other that it "serves George right."

Knowing my pamphlet, then, to be true, and knowing that the people, if familiar with its contents, would consider them proof of fundamental corruption in the heart of your candidate, you and other Single Taxers wish to keep the people in ignorance of the facts. Wherein does your conduct differ, I ask, from that of the merchant who sells a damaged article without informing the purchaser of its impaired quality? I assure you, my dear friend, that I am a little bit ashamed of you, and I hope you will soon give me reason to believe that you are ashamed of yourself.

Sincerely your friend,

BENJ. R. TUCKER.

Labor's Eyes Opening.

The united building trades of New York, one of the most important industrial organizations in the United States, held a mass meeting on Monday evening, October 25, to protest against the massacre of the Pennsylvania miners, and packed the great hall of Cooper Union to the doors and beyond. Resolutions of a thoroughly Anarchistic character were offered to the vast audience, on behalf of the committee of arrangements, by James McGill, of the Plasterers' Union, and were received with a rousing "Aye" and without a single voice of dissent. They are given below:

Whereas, the liberty to peaceably assemble and walk the streets and highways unmolesting and unmolested is one of the most important of civic liberties, to be zealously safeguarded in every possible manner; and

Whereas, this liberty has been wantonly violated by a disorderly band of armed men impudently styling themselves the sheriff and deputies of Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, who, after unwarrantably reading the riot act to a company of inoffensive laborers parading the public highway, did then and there act riotously themselves, opening a murderous fire upon unarmed and unresisting citizens and killing and wounding them by scores; and

Whereas, the governor of Pennsylvania sent the State militia to the scene, not only to protect the riotous officials from the vengeance of an outraged people, but to suspend the administration of justice without a declaration of martial law, and to prevent the application of its legal processes to the arrest and punishment of the flagrantly guilty,—it is hereby

Resolved, by the friends of liberty and labor here and now assembled, that the sheriff of Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, and his deputies, were the principals in an act of murder and massacre; that the governor of Pennsylvania, and the officers and members of the militia sent by him to the scene, were accessories after the fact; that all these murderers, both principals and accessories, deserve the treatment usually accorded to other murderers; and that we hope they will get their deserts. And be it further

Resolved, that, in view of the violations of individual liberty now more and more constantly occurring, it behooves all citizens, and especially working people, to give earnest study to the laws of political economy and social life, with a view to the discovery of a way whereby they may dispense forever with the so called "services" of governors to whom they now pay salaries for robbing and murdering them, and to particularly inquire whether Oliver Wendell Holmes, a justice of the Massachusetts supreme court, is right in his assertion that "there is nothing better than a guess at the foundation of the claim that our criminal law, as a whole, does more good than harm."

The calibre of the newspapers of New York may be judged by the following facts: that the "World" described these resolutions as calling for the abolition of salaried governors; that the "Press" described them as calling on the governor of Pennsylvania to see that the offenders are punished; and that the "Journal," which professes to especially champion the interests of labor, gave not a single line to this vast labor demonstration. The "News," which has a better claim than any other daily to the allegiance of labor, was the only paper to print the resolutions.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Judges in Defence of Injunctions.

It is somewhat unusual for judges to express through the medium of a newspaper their views on a great public question affecting their own authority and conduct, and it is proof of the universal and profound interest in the subject of "government by injunction" that many federal and State judges have been induced to discuss it in the columns of the Chicago "Times-Herald."

The symposium, published on September 12, was very interesting and suggestive, but neither the apologists or the opponents of injunctions in labor controversies dealt with the deeper aspects of the question. The treatment was decidedly superficial. There was a good deal of warmth and indignation in the contributions of some of the judges who regard the practice as usurpation pure and simple, but there was little argument. Perhaps these judges felt, with ex-Governor Altgeld, that the matter was too plain to be discussed by sophistry or to require elaborate argument. On the other hand, the judges who most unequivocally defended injunctions limited themselves to bare, unsupported assertions and irrelevant appeals to "principles" which no one has ever questioned.

First, let me quote a few of the gratifying and significant declarations of the anti-injunction judges.

Judge M. F. Tuley, chief justice of the Cook county circuit court, said:

> When "labor disputes" endanger the public peace or render the destruction of property imminent, no good citizen can object to the executive branch of the government using its "iron hand" to prevent either, but no amount of legal quibbling will satisfy the people that the writs of injunctions of the federal courts in the coal strike have not been issued and used for the purposes and object above stated.
>
> The courts, in issuing the writ, are usurping powers and functions involved by both federal and State constitutions upon the executive branch of the respective governments.
>
> Such use of the writ of injunction by the courts is judicial tyranny, which endangers not only the right of trial by jury, but all the rights and liberties of the citizen.

This, of course, is a statement rather than an argument, but, as judges are not addicted to the habit of attacking their own brethren, the fact that such an opinion is held by a judge of experience and learning is itself evidence of the extraordinary and questionable nature of the use of the injunction under consideration.

Chief Justice Phillips, of the Illinois supreme court, is moderate in tone and expression, but by no means uncertain in his conclusion. His opinion is naturally of great weight. He says:

> If there is a threat on the part of strikers to destroy property, and they are about to carry such threat into execution, or if there is a threat, which is about to be carried into execution, of doing violence to men who desire to work, a provision exists in the criminal code of this State for the prevention of such wrong.
>
> It was long a disputed question as to whether injunctions might issue to prevent a trespass to property, but that question is now settled, and jurisdiction is held to exist where there is insolvency on the part of the trespasser, or where the injury would be irremediable. When it is sought to extend the powers of courts of chancery to another class of cases of trespass, it is the invention of a new jurisdiction, if such jurisdiction can be said to exist, and such a power is liable to be misused and is attendant with danger to the personal liberty of individuals, as in a case of contempt for violation of the injunction. A hearing is had before the judge who ordered such writ and who determines for himself the guilt of the defendant, whether or not he is in contempt, and inflicts the punishment,—which in such cases is not defined and circumscribed by rules of law,—and may inflict punishment by imprisonment or fine, depriving the defendant of a trial by jury.
>
> The existence of such power may well be doubted, as may also the jurisdiction of a court of equity in such cases.

Chief Justice McCabe of Indiana, Judge Gibbons of Illinois, and other judges agree with the views cited, but add nothing requiring specific reference. We may turn to the "other side," and look into the apologies for injunctions against crimes or torts. The defence by Judge Grosscup, of the federal district court, is regarded by those who share his opinion as the ablest contribution to the symposium. It is certainly long, but, as an attempt at reasoning, it is worthless and empty.

Judge Grosscup starts out by telling us that legislation is not really the source of personal and property rights; that these rights antedate all congressional law, and are such as the English-speaking race has always recognized. Then he proceeds to lay down "axiomatic principles of government," such as that "our government is in no sense Socialistic, but, on the contrary, encourages every one to acquire property," and that individual men and women may engage in any lawful occupation and maintain that right against all intrusion. Suppose one admit this and everything that follows, what connection is there between it and the injunction question? Does the objection to injunctions rest on any Socialistic principle? Judge Grosscup is merely befogging the issue, and throwing dust in the eyes of the illogical. His glittering generalities have absolutely nothing to do with the case. With reference to the issue, we find nothing but these brief paragraphs:

> No lawyer has ever disputed the right and duty of courts, where the impending wrong would be irreparable, to restrain, for instance, illegal encroachments upon land; the commission of waste; the creation or maintenance of a nuisance; official oppression of all kinds committed by public officers under the color of their office; or, under some circumstances, the collection of judgments at law obtained by a creditor against his debtor. None of these injunctions make any new law; they simply declare the existing law applicable to the particular situation, and then proceed to enforce it in the only way that would do the aggrieved person any good.
>
> The injunction, therefore, is old,—an indispensable power of judicial usefulness,—but its application to labor troubles is much newer. New conditions have arisen, to which the law has been applying old remedies, and this misleads some very good people, and some very bad ones too, into hysterics over government by injunction.

Is there any attempt here to justify the application of the old remedies to the new conditions,—to show that courts are at liberty to make these applications, and that no constitutional guarantees are violated? No, we have merely a cool remark that "the law" has been applying old remedies to new conditions. Do, then, judges make the laws? Since when have they been entrusted formally with legislative functions? Judge Grosscup knows that the very charge against them is that they have manufactured law to order,—that they have overridden constitutions and customs and accepted principles, and applied old remedies to conditions which do not legally permit of such extensions and applications.

If injunctions against alleged rioters and disorderly persons are old remedies properly applied to new conditions, would not injunctions against forgers, thieves, and murderers be a further extension of the old remedy? If such extensions are perfectly legitimate, what becomes of the right to trial by jury? Besides, what is there "new" about disorder and riots and threats of assault and trespass? Does it make a difference whether strikers use such threats, or other persons? These and similar questions are left severely alone by Judge Grosscup. He prefers not to answer them; he finds it easier to lecture labor on its need of better education in law and political economy. Judge Grosscup, labor might rejoin, is evidently in need of better education in logic and the art of grasping an issue presented to him.

The other learned judges who defend labor injunctions are no more felicitous than Judge Grosscup. Here is a truly oracular deliverance from the chief justice of Ohio, J. F. Burket:

> Injunction cases are usually triable before the court, and this practice does not conflict with any constitutional guarantee, so far as has been determined by the supreme court of Ohio.

How conclusive and satisfactory! The "practice does not conflict with any constitutional guarantee." Does it not depend on what the "practice" is? Would an injunction against forgery, and punishment of a forger for contempt, be compatible with the constitutional guarantee?

It is obvious that not even an ingenious plea or plausible apology can be put forward in support of government by injunction. Those who have the faculty and habit of independent thinking will agree with ex-Governor Altgeld that the efforts to sustain injunctions have been so contemptible and feeble that no reply is really demanded by them.

V. Y.

Anarchy is Order.

[Continued.]

V.—Of the attitude of parties and of their newspapers.

The majesty of the people has no organ in the French press. Newspapers for the *bourgeois*, newspapers for the nobility, newspapers for the priests, republican newspapers, socialist newspapers,—only so many liveries! pure menialism! All these sheets clean, polish, and dust the trappings of some political knight in anticipation of a tournament in which the prize to be contested for is power,—that is, my servitude, the servitude of the people.

Except the "Presse," * which sometimes, when its editor forgets to be proud that he may remain high-minded, succeeds in attaining some elevation of sentiment; except the "Voix du Peuple," † which, from time to time, departs from the old routine to elucidate general interests,—I cannot read a French newspaper without feeling for its editor great pity or profound contempt.

On the other hand, I see governmental journalism, the journalism backed by the gold of the treasury and the sword of the army, the journalism whose head is encircled with the investiture of supreme authority, and which holds in its hand the thunderbolts that this investiture consecrates. I see it coming, I say, with fire in its eye, foam on its lips, and clenched fists, like a king of the market place, like a hero of the prize-ring; freely, and with brutal cowardice, heaping reproaches upon a disarmed adversary, over whom its power is unlimited, and from whom it has nothing, absolutely nothing, to fear; styling him thief, assassin, incendiary; penning him up like a wild beast, denying him the smallest pittance, throwing him into prison without knowing why, without telling him wherefore, and applauding its own conduct, boasting of the glory which it derives therefrom, as if, in fighting disarmed people, it risked something and confronted danger.

Such cowardice revolts me.

On the other hand appears the journalism of the opposition, a grotesque and ill-bred slave; passing its time in whining, sniveling, and asking pardon; saying, every time that they spit in its face and with every blow that it receives: "You are not treating me well; you are not just; I have done nothing to offend you;" and stupidly discussing, as if to give them legitimacy, the invectives hurled at it: "I am not a robber; I am not an assassin; I am not an incendiary; I revere religion; I love the family; I respect property; it is you, rather, who despise these things; I am better than you, and you oppress me; you are not generous."

Such crawling exasperates me.

I understand the brutality of power when it is directed against such disputants as those that I find in the opposition; I understand it, for, after all, when the weak are abject, it is possible to forget their weakness and remember only their abjection; now, abjection is an irritating thing, a crawling thing to be crushed under foot, as one crushes a worm. In a group of men calling themselves democrats and speaking in the name of the people, principle of all grandeur and dignity, abjection is a thing that I do not understand.

He who speaks in the name of the people speaks in the name of right; now it is incomprehensible to me that right should become irritated, that it should condescend to discuss with error, least of all that it should descend to complaint and supplication.

We undergo oppression, but we do not discuss with it when we wish it to die; for to discuss is to compromise.

Power is established; you have given yourselves a master; you have put yourselves (the whole country, by your adorable counsel and by your initiative, has put itself) at the disposition of a few men; these men use the power that you have given them; they use it against you, and you complain. Why? Did you think that they were going to use it against themselves? You could not have thought that; for what, then, do you blame them? Power must of necessity be exercised for the benefit of those who have it and to the injury of those who have it not; it is not possible to set it in motion without harming on the one hand and injuring on the other.

What would you do, if you were invested with it? Either you would not use it at all, which would be pure and simple renunciation of the investiture, or you would use it for your benefit and to the detriment of those who now have it, but who then would have it no longer. In the latter case you would cease to whine, whimper, and ask pardon, simply exchanging *rôles* with those who now insult you. But what care I, the people, who never have power and yet make it; who pay blood and money to the oppressor, no matter who he may be or whence he may come; who am always the oppressed, whatever turn things take,—what care I for this see-saw which, by turns, lowers and exalts cowardice and abjection? What have I to say touching the government and the opposition, save that one is a tyranny in suspension and the other a tyranny in exercise? And how does it become me to despise less this champion than that, when both busy themselves only in building their pleasures and their fortunes on my sufferings and my ruin?

VI.—Power is the enemy.

There is not a journal in France which is not hatching out a party; there is not a party which does not aspire to power; there is no power which is not an enemy of the people.

There is no journal which is not hatching out a party, for there is no journal which rises to that degree of popular dignity where the calm and supreme disdain of sovereignty sits as on a throne; the people is as impassible as right, as proud as force, as noble as liberty; parties are as turbulent as error, as snarling as impotence, as base as servility.

There is no party which does not aspire to power, for a party is essentially political and is formed consequently of the very essence of power, source of all politics. If a party ceased to be political, it would cease to be a party and would go back into the people,—that is, into the sphere of interests, production, industry, and business.

There is no power which is not inimical to the people, for, whatever the conditions in which it finds itself, whatever the men invested with it, by whatever name it may be called, power is always power,—that is, the indisputable sign of the people's abdication of sovereignty, the consecration of a supreme mastership. Now, the master is the enemy; Lafontaine is before me in saying so.

Power is the enemy in the social sphere and in the political sphere.

In the social sphere:

Because agricultural industry, the foster-mother of all national industries, is crushed by the tax levied upon it by power and devoured by the usury which inevitably results from the financial monopoly, the exercise of which is guaranteed by power to its disciples or agents.

Because labor—that is, intelligence—is confiscated by power with the aid of its bayonets, for the benefit of capital, in itself a raw and stupid element, which logically would be the lever of industry, were not power an obstacle in the way of their mutual association; which is only its extinguisher, thanks to power which separates them; which pays but half; and which, if it does not pay at all, has at its back laws and courts of governmental establishment disposed to postpone for several years the satisfaction of the injured laborer's appetite.

Because commerce, muzzled by the banking monopoly, of which power holds the key, and garroted by the slip-noose of a base system of regulation, of which power holds the end, can, by virtue of a contradiction which would be a certificate of idiocy if it existed elsewhere than among the keenest of all peoples, fraudulently enrich itself out of the indirect head of women and children, while prohibiting him, under penalty of infamy, from ruining himself.*

Because education is curtailed, chiseled, clipped, and reduced to the narrow dimensions of the mould made for the purpose by power, so that every mind which has not been pointed by power is absolutely as if it did not exist.

Because he who, in the name of power, pays the temple, the church, and the synagogue is precisely he who goes to neither the temple or the church or the synagogue.

Because, to put the whole thing in a nutshell, he is criminal who hears, sees, speaks, writes, feels, thinks, acts, otherwise than as he is bidden by power to hear, see, speak, write, feel, think, act.

In the political sphere:

Because parties exist and stain the country with blood only by and for power.

It is not Jacobinism that is feared by the Legitimists, the Orleanists, the Bonapartists, the Moderates; it is the power of the Jacobins.

It is not upon Legitimism that the Jacobins, the Orleanists, the Bonapartists, the Moderates, make war; it is upon the Legitimists.

And reciprocally.

All these parties which you see moving on the surface of the country, like floating froth on a boiling liquid, have declared war upon each other, not because of differences in doctrine or sentiment, but because of their common aspirations to power; if each of those parties could say to itself with certainty that the

* Emile de Girardin's journal.

† Proudhon's journal.

* The meaning here is not clear, and I am not sure of my translation. The French is: *peut s'enrichir frauduleusement sur le chef indirect des femmes et des enfants, pendant qu'il lui interdit de se ruiner sous peine d'infamie.* If I am wrong, I shall be obliged to any reader who shall set me right.—Editor Liberty.

power of none of these antagonists could any longer weigh upon it, the antagonism would cease instantly, as it ceased on February 24, 1848, when the people, having devoured power, assimilated the parties.

It is, therefore, true that a party, whatever it may be, exists and is feared only because it aspires to power; it is true that no party is dangerous which has not power; it is true, consequently, that whoever has power is quite as dangerous; *per contra*, is is superabundantly proven that there can exist no other public enemy than power.

Therefore, socially and politically speaking, power is the enemy.

And, as I have proven above that there is no party which does not aspire to power, it follows that every party is premeditately an enemy of the people.

VII.—THAT THE PEOPLE ONLY WASTES ITS TIME AND PROLONGS ITS SUFFERINGS IN ESPOUSING THE QUARRELS OF GOVERNMENTS AND PARTIES.

Thus is explained the absence of all the popular virtues from the breasts of governments and parties; thus it is that, in these groups which feed on petty hatreds, miserable revenges, and paltry ambitions, attack has fallen into cowardice, and defence into abjection.

The old journalism must be destroyed; those masters without nobility who tremble lest they may become valets must be stripped; those valets without pride who watch for the moment when they may make themselves masters must be discharged.

To understand how urgent it is to kill the old journalism, the people must see clearly two things.

First, that it only neglects its own affairs and prolongs its sufferings in espousing the quarrels of governments and parties and giving its activity a political direction instead of applying it to its material interests.

Second, that it has nothing to expect from any government or from any party.

Reserving a more precise demonstration until later, I lay it down as a fact that a party, stripped of that patriotic *éclat* and prestige with which it surrounds itself in order to entrap fools, is simply an assemblage of vulgarly ambitious persons in search of office. So true is this that the republic seemed endurable to the royalists only from the moment when the public offices were filled by the royalists, who, I make oath, will never demand the re-establishment of royalty as long as they are allowed to occupy in peace all the offices in the republic. So true is this that the republicans found royalty endurable only from the moment when, under the name of the republic, they began to manage and administer it. So true is this, in fact, that from 1815 to 1830 the *bourgeois* party made war upon the nobles, because the *bourgeois* were excluded from the offices; that from 1830 to 1848 the nobles and the republicans made war upon the *bourgeois*, because both were excluded from the offices; and that, since the advent of the royalists to power, the great grievance of the republicans against them is that they have ousted officials of so-called republican creation, thus confessing, with touching *naïveté*, that for them the republic is a question of salary-drawing.

For the same reason that a party is moved to appropriate offices or power, the government in possession of power strives to keep it. But, as a government finds itself, wrongly or rightly, in control of a combination of forces which enables it to hunt down, persecute, and oppress those who wish to strip it, the people, which, by a counter-stroke, suffers under the oppressive measures provoked by the agitation of the ambitious, and whose great soul, moreover, opens to the tribulations of the oppressed, suspends its business, calls a halt in the path of progress which it is pursuing, informs itself concerning what is being said and done, becomes irritated and inflamed, and finally lends a hand to aid in the overthrow of the oppressor.

But, the people not having fought in its own behalf,—since right, as I will explain later, has no need to fight in order to triumph,—it has won a profitless victory; placed at the service of the ambitious, its arm has lifted into power a new *coterie* in place of the old one; and soon, the oppressors of the day before becoming the oppressed, the people, which, as before, again receives the counter-stroke of the oppressive measures provoked by the agitation of the vanquished party, and whose great soul, as usual, opens to the tribulations of the victims, again suspends its business, and finally lends a hand once more to the ambitious.

The upshot is that the people, in this brutal and cruel game, only wastes its time and aggravates its situation; it impoverishes itself and suffers. It does not advance a step.

It is difficult—I confess it without repugnance—for the populace, moved wholly by sentiment and passion, to contain itself when the goad of tyranny pricks too deep; but, if it is demonstrated that party fury ends only in making things worse, and if it is proven further that the evil of which the people has to complain comes to it from groups which, by the very fact that they do not act with it, act against it, it remains only for parties to come to a halt, in the name of the people which they oppress, which they impoverish, which they debase, and which they accustom to quarreling. But parties cannot be relied on. The people must rely only on itself.

Without going too far back in our history; taking only the pages of the two years just past,—it is easy to see that the oppressive laws which have been passed originated primarily in party turbulence. It would be a long and irksome task to enumerate them, but I must say, in order to conform to the exactness of historical facts, that, if since 1848 a tyrannical measure can be cited which does not rest on party provocations and is due to the sweet will of those in power, it is that the execution of which M. Ledru-Rollin enjoined in his circulars to his prefects.

Since that time the popular prerogatives have vanished one by one, as a result of having been discovered and betrayed by the impatience and agitation of the ambitious. Power being unable to discriminate, the law inflicts on all the blows which ought to fall on parties only; the people is oppressed, the fault is exclusively the fault of parties.

If parties did not feel the people at their backs; if, at least, the people, exclusively occupied with its material interests, its industries, its commerce, its business, covered with its indifference or its contempt that low strategy called politics; if it took, in regard to moral agitation, the attitude which it took on June 13 in regard to material agitation,—the parties, suddenly isolated, would cease to agitate; the sense of their impotence would freeze their audacity; they would wither where they stand, their individual members would fall away one by one into the great body of the people, and finally they would fade away; and government, which exists only by opposition, which feeds only on the quarrels that parties excite, which has its *raison d'être* in parties only, which for fifty years has done nothing but defend itself, and which, if it would stop defending itself, would cease to exist,—government, I say, would rot like a corpse; it would dissolve of itself, and the foundation of liberty would be laid.

A. BELLEGARIGUE.

[To be continued.]

The Sunrise Club and Its Papa.

In 1893 Mr. John Beverley Robinson and Mrs. Robinson took the initiative in the formation of a club in this city to meet fortnightly for dinner and discussion. The preliminary meeting was attended, I think, by eight persons, of whom I was one. Mr. Robinson was made secretary, and given full powers. He conducted the club with great success for three seasons, increasing the membership to one hundred or more. As he was unable to give his time a fourth season, the secretaryship was given over to Mr. E. C. Walker, who proved an admirable successor. During the fourth season he added many members to the roll, and the club dinners were as interesting as ever.

Since the meeting at which the club was formed, no business meeting has ever been held, for the very good reason that there has been no business to do. The fifth season began on October 11, 1897, and Mr. Walker made the egregious mistake of inviting Hugh O. Pentecost to deliver the opening address. The record of that individual is too well known to Liberty's readers to make it necessary to explain why most of the members of the club were made indignant by this selection. For myself, I promptly sent my resignation to the secretary, and, as he refused to read it at the next meeting of the club, I embodied it in a printed letter to the members, which was distributed at the opening dinner, and which I give below:

NEW YORK, *October* 11, 1897.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SUNRISE CLUB:

I am compelled to take this method of communicating with you by the deliberate refusal of our secretary, in disregard of his clear official duty, to read to the club, at its meeting of this date, a letter which I have addressed to you through him. I have thought, heretofore, that the beneficent one-man power which has always successfully guided our club was rendered harmless to the individual member by his liberty to secede. But now it appears that the right of secession does not adequately guard the right to a prompt official announcement of the act of secession.

The letter which the secretary refuses to read is as follows:

NEW YORK, *October* 4, 1897.

MR. E. C. WALKER,
Secretary of the Sunrise Club.

DEAR FRIEND AND FELLOW MEMBER,

Great is my surprise at receiving from you an announcement that the Sunrise Club is to open its coming season with an address from Mr. Hugh O. Pentecost, a man whose treacherous record entitles him to nothing but the contempt of every honest man.

Were I a less conspicuous member of the club, I

should content myself with marking my disapproval of this move by absenting myself from the opening dinner. But it so happens that I was one of the original eight who founded the club; that in the past I have worked actively for its success; that I have presided at several of its dinners; that at several others I have made the opening address; and that at almost all I have been a more or less prominent figure. It would not be unnatural, then, in the absence of some positive adverse action on my part, were my fellow members to believe, or at any rate surmise, that I sympathize with your course in inviting Mr. Pentecost to sit for an evening at the head of our club-table. I should the more regret to have such a misconception prevail, as it would imply a change of attitude on my part toward a man whose acquaintance I, as a private individual, have cut, and whose infamous career I, as an editor, have unsparingly condemned.

For this reason I am obliged to ask you, and most regretfully, to erase my name from the club's membership roll, and to read this my letter of resignation at the next meeting of the club.

Let me add, however, that, though thus parting from the club, I entertain for its success and increased usefulness the same hearty wishes that I have felt from its foundation, and that no one can more highly appreciate than I your own generous, untiring, and remarkably efficient services as the club's secretary.

Yours faithfully,

BENJ. R. TUCKER.

The reason assigned by the secretary for his refusal to read the foregoing letter is the fact that such reading would be discourteous to Mr. Pentecost. I submit to you that it is not my fault if the secretary has placed himself in a position where he must choose between denying a fellow-member his merited rights and denying Mr. Pentecost unmerited courtesies. I certainly cannot allow a consideration of courtesy to stand in the way of what I consider a much needed protest against the extension, in so prominent a fashion, of the hospitalities of the Sunrise Club, founded to encourage the sincere search for truth, to a man who has abundantly proved himself incapable of harboring any purpose at once honorable, sincere, and steadfast.

Hoping to retain your respect and friendship individually, I bid you, as a club, an affectionate farewell.

BENJ. R. TUCKER.

The conduct of Mr. Walker in this matter is one of the most astonishing things in my experience. He maintains that, when the secretary of a club receives a letter of resignation from a member, he has a right to pocket the letter and never mention it. I am dazed by the assumption of so untenable an attitude of authoritarianism by a professed libertarian. A man who has spent his life in stoutly fighting paternalism setting up as a sort of papa to a club of grown men and women! Think of it!

T.

The world's in luck. With every reason to expect that Dana would live to be a hundred (for his body seemed exceptionally sound, though his soul was rotten), it suddenly finds itself relieved of the old scoundrel's presence. We ne'er shall see his like again.

The "Evening Telegram" (probably falsely, for I counted in the article eleven absolute lies told by the "Telegram" regarding matters of fact) reports Hugh O. Pentecost as declaring that he holds me in high respect. Well, there's no reason why he shouldn't. I hold him in profound contempt. And equally there's no reason why I shouldn't.

In 1886 Henry George received 68,000 votes for the New York mayoralty out of a total of about 218,000. Assuming that the total vote of 1897 will be 525,000 (probably an underestimate), he must receive, to do as well relatively as he did in 1886, an aggregate of 163,000 votes. The number of votes by which he falls short of 163,000 will measure the degree in which the traitor has been found out. Watch the outcome.

What Anarchism Means.

[Stephen T. Byington in Cleveland Reformer.]

Anarchism is the advocacy of the abolition of government. It is not a method of war against government, or a theory of what we should do when free from government. On both these points—the means to be used for attaining the end, and the use to be made of that end when attained—there is as much difference among Anarchists as among the advocates of any other cause.

Anarchism means that we want to get rid of government. Government, according to the leading authorities on political science, is a social organization claiming and exercising the exclusive privilege, within a certain territory, of enforcing its decrees by violence against whoever does not submit to them, and using this authority with a view to realizing justice and order within its domain. If it lacks any of these qualities, it is not a government. A band of pirates can never be a government, because it does not aim at justice, though it may have all the other qualities of government. A secret society may exercise all the functions of government toward its members, but is not a government as long as it does not claim jurisdiction over everybody within a certain boundary, and exclude from these limits all other governmental jurisdictions.

It follows that, if one destroys any of these features of government, it is no longer government; he has destroyed the government, and left in its place something that is not government. Now, Anarchists do not in general object to social organization for enforcing justice (as defined by Herbert Spencer) by violence against violators of justice; but they do object to letting any such organization have an exclusive (monopolistic) privilege, such as belongs to government, and they object to the violent enforcement of the organization's decrees as such. Hence it appears that they do not want a government, though they would still do some of the work that government does.

Obviously the above complicated definition is useful for any science which describes things as they are, but useless for any science which analyzes the nature and reason of things. For a discussion of what ought to be, we need a definition that turns on a single essential point. If we are to use the word "government" in social philosophy, therefore, we must pick out one point as the essential one in this complicated popular conception. Anarchists find this essential point in the use of force to control the lives of others, as distinguished from the use of force to protect one's own life or that of another against violent interference. The former is government, the latter self-defence. Of course this definition, or any definition consisting of a single point, puts a new face on government. The state of Algerine pirates is now government. So is the act of a man who ravishes a woman, governing the woman temporarily by his violence. So is the act of a policeman who stops a Chinese immigrant from entering this country; but the policeman who arrests the ravisher is acting defensively, Anarchistically, against government.

Anarchism, then, means simply opposition to all use of violence, exept in restraint of criminal violence. The phrase Anarchists use as a shibboleth is: "No force except against force." It always seems to me that a mere statement of the principle ought to be enough to win the support of the thinking public in the present stage of civilization. But this principle involves the most extensive changes from the present system, and people are terribly afraid of change.

The first great change involved in the Anarchist principle is the abolition of compulsory taxation. Since a man who does not pay his taxes is not thereby interfering with anybody else, it is governmental or criminal (Anarchists usually define crime as identical with government) to collect them by force. It is not objectionable, however, to collect them by refusing to give non-payers the services of police, schools, etc., for which the taxes pay. But those who prefer to secure the same services elsewhere must be left free to do so. So we come to the abolition of the monopoly feature of government. Anarchists recognize no peculiar authority in any set of men, whether majority or minority, giving them the exclusive right to control the police or any other service. It would, therefore, be possible in Anarchist society for half a dozen police agencies, each with its own patrolmen, courts, and jails, to be acting at the same time on the same ground; and without doubt this would actually be the case at one time or another. The relations of such agencies to each other would be somewhat like the present relations between independent nations, and one would guard against outrages by another very much as one nation now secures for its citizens fair play in the courts of another. Anarchists usually demand that all cases be triable by a true jury, consisting of twelve men taken at random from the people, each of whom is to judge for himself of both fact and law, and of the rightfulness of the law; and no penalty is to be inflicted, nor property to change hands, except by a unanimous verdict.

Whatever services are necessary for civilized society, or are worth their cost, these the people of America will provide for themselves without needing a law to compel them to, or else the Yankees have less head for business than is commonly supposed. Neither can we doubt that sensible people would be able to do without the constant fighting that is suggested to some folks by the idea of two police forces in one territory.

The other great change involved in the Anarchist principle is the abolition of laws which restrict, for the supposed "public good," any business or action except criminal violence. I mean the abolition of these laws as enforced by the policeman's club; there will remain as safeguards of morality the individual conscience, public opinion, and the boycott. These are what do the business, in the main, today. Adultery is not a crime in many States, or in England; are these places more adulterous than the States that punish adultery? It is no offence, according to law-books on indecent exposure, for a man or woman to go stripped to the waist in public. Who does? Indeed, Mrs. Grundy's rule is too strict for the public good; consider the bloomers.

Do not forget that government directly supports pernicious businesses. Sober, respectable men are compelled to help pay for giving the services of government to businesses which stand in especial need of such services, but would never pay the cost of them for themselves. State inspectors of banks, insurance, etc., give a good reputation by their reports to schemers who could not have got it otherwise. All the big rotten and oppressive commercial enterprises rest on monopolies created by law in money, land, patents, tariffs, etc. Government itself is the centre of fraud and monopoly. If you overheard a man saying, "It's a big steal," would you not know at once that he was speaking of some government business, or something specially authorized by government? Because competition with government is prohibited, government is able to breed an amount of thievery, incompetency, and favoritism that would be impossible in any other business, because they would destroy any business in which they existed under ordinary business conditions.

Those who call themselves Anarchists are divided into two main bodies,—those who uphold the institution of property and those who do not. When I say "Anarchists," I mean the former school, and, when I say "violence," I mean the disturbance of property as well as of the person. Most Anarchists would make it cover certain cases of gross fraud, too.

Of course real non resistants are necessarily Anarchists, but Anarchists are not generally non-resistants. Very few of them, however, favor the use of violence to further the Anarchist cause in a land of free speech. Their policy is education, practical disregard of law wherever possible, and passive resistance when there is a hope of accomplishing anything. The well-known acts of violence under the Anarchist name are by Anarchist-Communists. But these, also, at least in this country, are drifting toward the policy advocated by those whom I recognize as Anarchists.

I have been telling what Anarchism is. I have hardly hinted at what the abolition of government would do toward industrial peace and a just reward for labor, and toward practical brotherhood and co-operation between those who are now artificially separated into different nations.

Ding-dong Dingley.

Ding dong Dingley,
We've got your little bill;
Ding dong Dingley,
It's a *very* bitter pill.

With sugar on the increase
And other staples too,
The poor man assuredly
Has "got it in" for you.

"Protection" that we hear about
"Protects" a very few;
The people grin and bear it—
'Tis all that they can do.

But wait till 1900,*
When labor's friends will talk;
Then, ding-dong Dingley,
We'll let you take a walk!

Arthur B. Barteaux.

From a Prominent Illinois Lawyer.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I wish to express to you my entire agreement with you in your argument concerning the special jury law of New York, and my great admiration of the manner in which you presented it. An experience of almost thirty years with courts and juries has convinced me that what remains of the jury system, emasculated and perverted as it has been by State law and judicial decision, is still the greatest safeguard of individual liberty we have in our present social organization.

Moreover I am equally sure that it is against it that the people who are, consciously or unconsciously, working to enslave their fellow-men are directing their most dangerous and most effective efforts.

Nothing makes me more indignant than the "lectures" and "reprimands" which judges give jurors for acting according to their own judgments within the limits of their oaths and their active duty.

EDWARD O. BROWN.

CHICAGO, ILL.

The Failure of Government Telegraphy.

[Newcastle Chronicle, August 4.]

England is the birthplace of the telegraph; and if it does not ere long become its burial-place also, the fault will certainly not rest with those responsible for the administration of the telegraph department. So great is the delay to which telegrams are now subjected, so numerous and misleading are the blunders which they contain, and so obvious is it, moreover, that both delays and errors tend to increase rather than to diminish, that business people, to whom a rapid and reliable means of communication is indispensable, will be forced to consider very seriously whether their purpose will not be better served by the employment of the railway, the bicycle, or the carrier pigeon in the stead of wire. We feel sure that we shall have with us everybody who is compelled to have recourse at all extensively to this branch of the postal service when we assert that during the past few months the telegraphic system, which has for years been going slowly from bad to worse, has ceased to be either a rapid or an accurate method of communication. A telegram which is delayed hours in transmission is often useless; a telegram which in the course of handling is mutilated out of all intelligibility is worse than useless. It becomes a delusion and a snare, and a highly fertile source of grave inconvenience and heavy pecuniary loss. The latter-day postal telegram is tardy in arriving, and frequently incomprehensible when it does arrive. When it is not incomprehensible, it is apt to convey a meaning the reverse of that intended by the sender. Important negatives are omitted, figures are converted into cabalistic words, and words into equally mysterious figures. As for the time consumed in manufacturing these blunders, an experiment instituted by ourselves the other day demonstrated that between Newcastle and Sunderland the train achieved an easy victory over the wire. Under government mismanagement, therefore, the telegraph has been almost entirely deprived of its two essentials to utility, and recently our own experiences have been such as to lead us to believe that the service, so to speak of what might more appropriately be called a disservice, is on the verge of breaking down altogether. Complaints are unavailing. They are acknowleged, of course, in stereotyped language, and on a printed form which it is necessary merely to date and sign at the bottom; but no improvement results either from courteous representations or indignant remonstrances. This being so, we are tempted, like Baron Marschal von Bieberstein, and not without a strong conviction that the English public will thank us for our action as much as the German public thanked him for his, to "take refuge in publicity." A few examples will suffice to show how the department discharges what it conceives to be its duty to the community. Last week a message dispatched to us from London at eight P. M. reached us shortly after midnight. On Monday a portion of our parliamentary report was sent off, as the post office's own coding proves, at twelve minutes after midnight—an hour when, one would naturally suppose, the wires are clear and delay, unless intentionally caused, almost impossible. The message was delivered at twenty minutes to four. Indeed, it would seem that between three and four hours, or not a great deal more than is required for an express train to cover the distance, is the time needed to transmit a telegram between Newcastle and London. The house of commons adjourned yesterday morning at 12.57 A. M. Our representative in the reporters' gallery advised us of the fact in a telegram dispatched at 12.59. His message, which consisted of four words, was delivered at 3.30. An adequate notion of the condition in which telegrams are received could be conveyed only by printing them *verb. et lit.*; and our readers may accept our assurance, if assurance is needful, that, were they so printed, in a large number of instances they would be quite undecipherable.

Surely, it is none too early to direct the attention of the community to this scandalous state of affairs. The public is a long-suffering body. It puts up with the waste and extravagance of those whom it has authorized to act in its name, pays cheerfully for services which are never rendered, and is even inclined to join in the applause which its blundering and incompetent bureaucrats periodically bestow upon themselves in reports to parliament and at social gatherings. But telegraphy plays so prominent a part in the commercial and industrial life of the nation that we must confess to a sense of surprise that the flagrant maladministration of the telegraph department should not have provoked a warmer protest than any yet uttered. The public being unorganized, its wrath is, perhaps, inarticulate; and it may be that there exists a patience born of ignorance. We all know that, by his mischievous legislation in the early eighties, Mr. Chamberlain effectually prevented the development of electrical enterprise on the large scale in this country. Everybody is aware, too, that our telephonic system is the most inefficient and expensive in the world. But people are not brought directly into contact with the telegraph instrument, as they are with the telephone and the electric lamp; and it may be imagined that delays and errors are inseparable from telegraphy. If such a belief is prevalent, however, we can tell those who entertain it that it is wholly groundless. There is not the slightest reason why telegrams should be delayed, and there is not the slightest reason why they should be full of inaccuracies. On the contrary, as year after year has elapsed, there has been more and more reason why telegraphy should improve in respect both of speed and reliability. If we are asked why, in these circumstances, it has deteriorated instead of improving, we can only reply that the cause is departmental incapacity. If the service had been managed by men of brains, determination, and business like instincts, the public would have secured with the lapse of time, not only more accurate and more rapid, but also less costly, telegraphy. Seven-and twenty years ago, however, the industry was transferred from men who understood it and were resolved to develop it in their interests and in the interests of the community—interests which were identical—to a number of government officials who did not understand it, whose interests were different from that of the community, and who did not care whether it was developed or not. Very naturally, its development was checked. The post office has not merely not kept pace with the requirements of the nation's progress,—that could not have been expected of it,—but in some respects it has deprived the public of facilities which were enjoyed a quarter of a century ago. We maintain that proposition unhesitatingly; and no proof of its unsoundness is offered by the annual publication of a report showing that so many more telegraph stations have been opened during the year. It would be difficult to conceive a more forcible object-lesson in the futility of State control than that offered by the history of the telegraph department since its creation in 1870. If nationalizers and municipalizers will not learn from it, nothing can teach them. During the twenty-seven years which separate us from the date just named, telegraphic science has made astounding strides. It may be said without the slightest exaggeration that, thanks to perfection of the Wheatstone machine and to the discovery of the multiplex systems, a wire is capable of doing twelve times as much work now as it was when the transfer of the lines to the post office took place. Of these improvements the community ought to have had the bulk of the benefit; and infallibly they would have had it if the competing companies had been allowed to continue in existence. As a matter of fact, the public have not only derived no advantage from modern discoveries in this branch of electrical science, but the cost of their telegraphy has been increased to them. It has become less accurate and less rapid, and it has become dearer.

[August 5.]

That the government, which in the exercise of even the most legitimate of its functions is incessantly stumbling from one preposterous blunder into another, accumulating cavalry mounts in one spot and their saddles in another and far distant locality, and building ships which it does not dare send to sea, can attain to perfection in anything will be scouted by the majority of intelligent people as a ridiculous proposition. Certainly, it is a proposition which we should hesitate to admit. But it really seems to us that the post office authorities deserve to be complimented on having reached perfection in the art of mismanaging one branch of the business with which the nation has foolishly entrusted them. They are, it is true, endowed with a peculiar aptitude for bungling; and there is no reason, so far as they themselves are concerned, why their mismanagement should not be perfect in every department of their activity. But in their principal sphere they have not been allowed full scope for their capabilities, and hence have not succeeded in sinking below the level of dull mediocrity. When the post office acts as a common carrier, collecting and distributing letters and parcels, it acquits itself of its duty in a manner which, if far from satisfactory, is at all events passable. But that is its misfortune, not its fault. In doing its common carrying the post office is sadly handicapped by the coöperation of the railways. It is by the railway companies that the most important part of the work is performed; and, as the railways, which belong to people whose capital is at stake, are rationally conducted, the perfection of mismanagement is necessarily unattainable in the mail service. In the telegraph department it is different. There the postal officials enjoy a free hand; and the upshot is a mismanagement so complete that the public would in many cases be better off if no telegraph existed. This is, we maintain, in its way, a most remarkable achievement. It becomes the more remarkable when we reflect that it has been accomplished in the face of most formidable obstacles. If the post office as a letter carrier has been hampered by the energy and the enterprise of the railway companies, the post office as telegraphist has also been impeded by the industry and the ingenuity of the electrician. For more than a quarter of a century the strides taken by electrical science in the direction of cheap, rapid, and reliable telegraphy have been stupendous; and nothing short of a State department could possibly have resisted the torrent of progress. Sir John Pender, Sir Charles Bright, or any of the pioneers of electrical communication would have succumbed at once. But it is "dogged as does it."

* But don't expect the millennium in 1900. Whether Dingley walks or stays, thieves will continue to steal.—EDITOR LIBERTY.

Amazing as the statement may be, it is a fact that the post office has succeeded, not only in stemming the flood, but actually in beating it back. Telegraphy, we say, with every proof at our command, ought to have been growing cheaper, more speedy, and more accurate. It has become slower, dearer, and more inaccurate; and now it is, to a large extent, practically useless. The person who entrusts the post office with a telegram never knows when it will be delivered, or how it will be delivered, or whether it will be delivered at all. All he can feel reasonably sure about is that his message will reach its destination, if it does reach it, bearing information exactly the opposite of that which it was intended to convey. And for this he is charged considerably more than he had to pay seven-and-twenty years ago. The post office has carried its mismanagement to such a pitch of perfection as to deprive the very word "telegraphy" of a portion of its signification. Writing in 1892, Mr. Preece, the chief engineer of the telegraph department, explained that while "telegraph" was "a general name for any means of conveying intelligence other than by voice or by the transmission of written messages," "the idea of speed is generally understood." The idea, thanks to the post office, is now excluded. What is now connoted by "telegraphy" is delay, vexation, loss, and chaos.

Upon having elaborated these conditions in circumstances so unpropitious the post office authorities are, as we have admitted, entitled to plume themselves. As a matter of fact, they are constantly pluming themselves. But the public can hardly be expected to manifest an equal measure of complaisancy. What appears to be a source of satisfaction to the post office is an intolerable nuisance to the public; and the public, we trust, is determined that the nuisance shall be abated. The public, we trust, is resolved that its telegraphic business shall be transacted with promptitude and with accuracy; and, if the public is wise, it will also insist that it shall be transacted economically. And, after all, the affair is the public's. The wires belong to the community, not to the post office; and it is for the community to see that the property which it purchased at so absurdly high a price in 1870 is not allowed to go to wreck and ruin. It is, of course, the faculty of a government to blunder; and the hugest blunder conceivable was committed by the government from the very first by placing the wires under the control of the post office. To this initial error the deadlock which now exists is mainly attributable. Upon what ground can so absurd an arrangement be explained? Upon what ground can it be excused? What connection exists between the duties of the post office and those of the telegraph department? None whatever? The post office might as reasonably be put in charge of the army, or the fleet, or the militia, as in charge of the telegraphs. The telegraph department is a highly technical branch of the public service. If the work allotted to it is to be adequately discharged, the operators must be persons who are possessed of superior intelligence and have undergone a prolonged training. The post office, on the other hand, is engaged merely in performing the duties of a common carrier. A certain amount of organizing capacity is required of the chiefs of the staff; and, of course, the expert sorter and letter-carrier get through their duties more smartly than experienced men would. But, speaking broadly, the work of the post office is work which anybody can do. The heads of the post office know nothing of telegraphy. We question whether they would recognize a telegraph instrument, if they saw one; and of the nature of telegraphic business they must necessarily be ignorant. Yet they are the supreme controllers of the telegraph department. Any order which they may issue has to be obeyed, however impracticable or however ridiculous it may be,—and an ignorant man may issue ridiculous orders with the best of intentions,—and can be appealed against only to another postal official. Could any arrangement better calculated than this to conduce to confusion well be devised? It leads to some amazing results, apart altogether from those arising from the regulations formulated by men who have no notion of the business which they are endeavoring to regulate—results which some persons never dream of. Thus, a telegraph official who has spent all his life in acquiring a knowledge of telegraphy, and who has years of experience, will be removed from his position and set to manage postal work; while a postal official of similar experience will be transferred from a position in which his services are valuable to another in which his principal duty will be to attempt to manage a telegraph office. This is called promotion. It promotes the officials to higher salaries, but it promotes the telegraph service to the dogs. An essential reform, if the telegraph is to be improved, is that the telegraph department shall be managed by telegraphists, and the post office by postmen. Unless this change can be secured, it is hopeless to look for material or durable improvement.

A second reform of equal importance, but one which would almost inevitably follow from the adoption of the first, is that the telegraph department shall be allowed to retain its operators after it has trained them. At present, it is allowed to train them, and is then compelled to let them go. No system could be more ludicrous. The public has heard a good deal lately of the discontent prevalent in the telegraph department, but it does not understand the cause of the trouble. If it did, we feel sure that it would have intervened for its own sake. The post office, everybody will admit, is bound, in duty to the public, to get its work done as cheaply as possible. Nothing is to be gained by pursuing a policy at variance with the laws of political economy. But the complaint is that the department does not act in accordance with the dictates of those laws. It will not pay the market price for its labor. The consequence is that its labor leaves it, and it finds itself with an insufficiency of staff to carry on its work. It is understaffing that is responsible for the present condition of affairs. What happens is this. A telegraph clerk cannot be picked up in the gutter. He must be trained for his work, and his training occupies the better part of five years. During that period he is apt to be more bother than he is worth. After it his services are valuable. It is at that point, therefore, that cable companies in want of expert telegraphists begin to compete for him. Incredible as it may seem, it is at that point, also, that the British government allows them to acquire him. Rather than pay him the salary he can command elsewhere, they let him go. The necessary result is that the work of the department is done, or, rather, mangled, by learners and incompetents. Were the department managed by telegraphists, as it ought to be, we cannot believe that this system would be permitted to continue.

Liberty and the Money Question.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I sat at table with Yarros at the Iroquois Club dinner, mentioned in Liberty, No. 353; consequently I was also a listener to the address delivered by Mr. E. O. Brown on that occasion on "The Future of Democracy."

As it does not seem to me to be of much importance whether the shamming hypocrites who call themselves "Gold Democrats," who met at Indianapolis, adopted a platform, and nominated candidates, for the sole purpose of concealing from their former associates their real object, and the sincere, but fanatical, crowd who met at Chicago and declared for compulsory silver, and who called themselves Democrats, ever come together and again act in political harmony or not, I did not, at the time, give careful or thoughtful attention to what Mr. Brown said. But, on reading the criticism in Liberty, it seemed to me that Mr. Yarros had, for some undivulged reason, purposely avoided reference to the real and fundamental fault in Mr. Brown's argument. Mr. Brown asserts that "the essential principle of the Democratic party is something more than a question of business methods; it is fundamental; it is a belief in, and the advocacy and defence of, personal, individual liberty." He says that "money is a tool *only*." The kind and quantity of money that the people may be permitted to use "is a matter of detail, or of mere finance." Mr. Brown is a Democrat, and in the past has affiliated and acted with the Democratic party because he was an individualist: one who believed that personal liberty is an essential to proper human growth and development; and one who, with a large except, is still an individualist. If any one should ask Mr. Brown how men could enjoy personal liberty while living under a government which obliged them by force to forego the benefits of their own industry, he would immediately say that it was impossible. But he says that the money question does not involve anything of that kind; therefore let us put it to one side, and not bother ourselves about it any more. Let us see.

It is self-evident that no man is free who is deprived, in opposition to his will, of any part of the fruits of his toil; he becomes a slave, partial or complete, proportionately to the degree of spoliation. It is also self-evident that it is impossible for men to enjoy all of the results of their personal energy, unless they can freely exchange with each other all of the products of their labor. If there are insurmountable obstructions, may it not be fairly asked how men are to freely exchange the products of their labor while those obstructions remain? If the government by force prevents men from using the best means, or any means, of accomplishing exchanges, is not industrial liberty interfered with and obstructed?

Now, the money question may be "a matter of detail, or mere finance," and money may be called "a tool only," but the tool itself, the freedom of its use, and the scope of its functions, together constitute a question of much larger significance than Mr. Brown seems to think; in fact, its real import is of scarcely less importance to men than the freedom to use the universal instrument which we call land. Of course no Single Taxer will ever so far forget his religious adherence to that dogma as to consider the relative importance of the money question, so long as there is a chance to discuss his favorite theme. Perhaps the study of agrarian Socialism has so warped Mr. Brown's individualism that he is unable to think straight upon the money question; or perhaps he has given the subject so little real study that he has failed to reach correct results; he is certainly "way off" in relation to the importance of the money question. For really, in so far as the people of the United States are concerned, the money question is of much more importance to them than the land question; furthermore, in political discussion, the money question is now at the very forefront of public debate,—the paramount question of the hour. It is true that life is impossible apart from land, but it is also true that the industrial activity which sustains life as we now know it would be utterly impossible in the absence of the means by which to accomplish exchanges. Man could exist if he was deprived of the benefits which arise from the use of money; he could dig something out of the ground, or gather something from the vegetation which grew near him; he could trade, in a very small way, things for other things; but he could not *live*. Money itself is really an abstraction; its concrete expression is, like other commodities, a result of labor; it is therefore expensive. The abstraction can be reduced to writing; consequently we have a form of money, expressed in terms of money, which we call credit. One of the functions of money is to measure the value of commodities in relation to each other, and another is to facilitate the exchange of those commodities. Metallic money, or its specific representatives, like other commodities, represent labor already performed; consequently no exchange of commodities accomplished by the use of metallic money is an expensive operation; credit costs almost nothing; consequently any exchange of commodities that is effected by the agency of credit becomes an inexpensive achievement. The needs of man require that an exchange of the products of labor shall take place: the necessities which require those exchanges also demand that requisite facilities be afforded for their safe and easy accomplishment. In response to this demand the ingenious thought of man has enabled him to so develop the ways and means of employing the abstract quality of money by the use of written forms that he is now, when free, able to accomplish most of the business of the civilized world without the use of metallic money.

By the use of credit the value of every piece of property, regardless of its general character, size, or location, can be made instantly available for transfer, provided each individual is left free to issue to every other individual promises to pay money whenever they may desire to do so. Consequently, under conditions of freedom, credit becomes a circulating capital, always and instantly available, the labor-saving quality of which gives it a value the magnitude of

which is scarcely measurable. In these days of minute divisions of labor, diversification and differentiation of industry, the major part of industrial activity consists in the distributive exchange of commodities between those who produce them and those who consume them. In the United States the people are actually and totally inhibited, either as individuals or by association, from using promises to pay money, based upon their credit, as a currency or circulating medium.

They are, therefore, arbitrarily denied the right to use, and denied the benefit of the use of, a labor-saving instrument of immense value; they are, in consequence, forced to submit to extortionate interest charges for the use of money; vast quantities of property remain dead and unproductive because the means of making it available for exchange and use are thus arbitrarily denied; the efficiency of the results of all their labor is materially impaired; some of it is made wholly unavailable, and thus practically destroyed; the money monopoly is complete, and men who would otherwise be free are thereby made slaves: and yet it is said by a professed individualist that the money question is of so small importance in relation to any interference with industrial freedom that it need not at present be considered. A. W. WRIGHT.

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